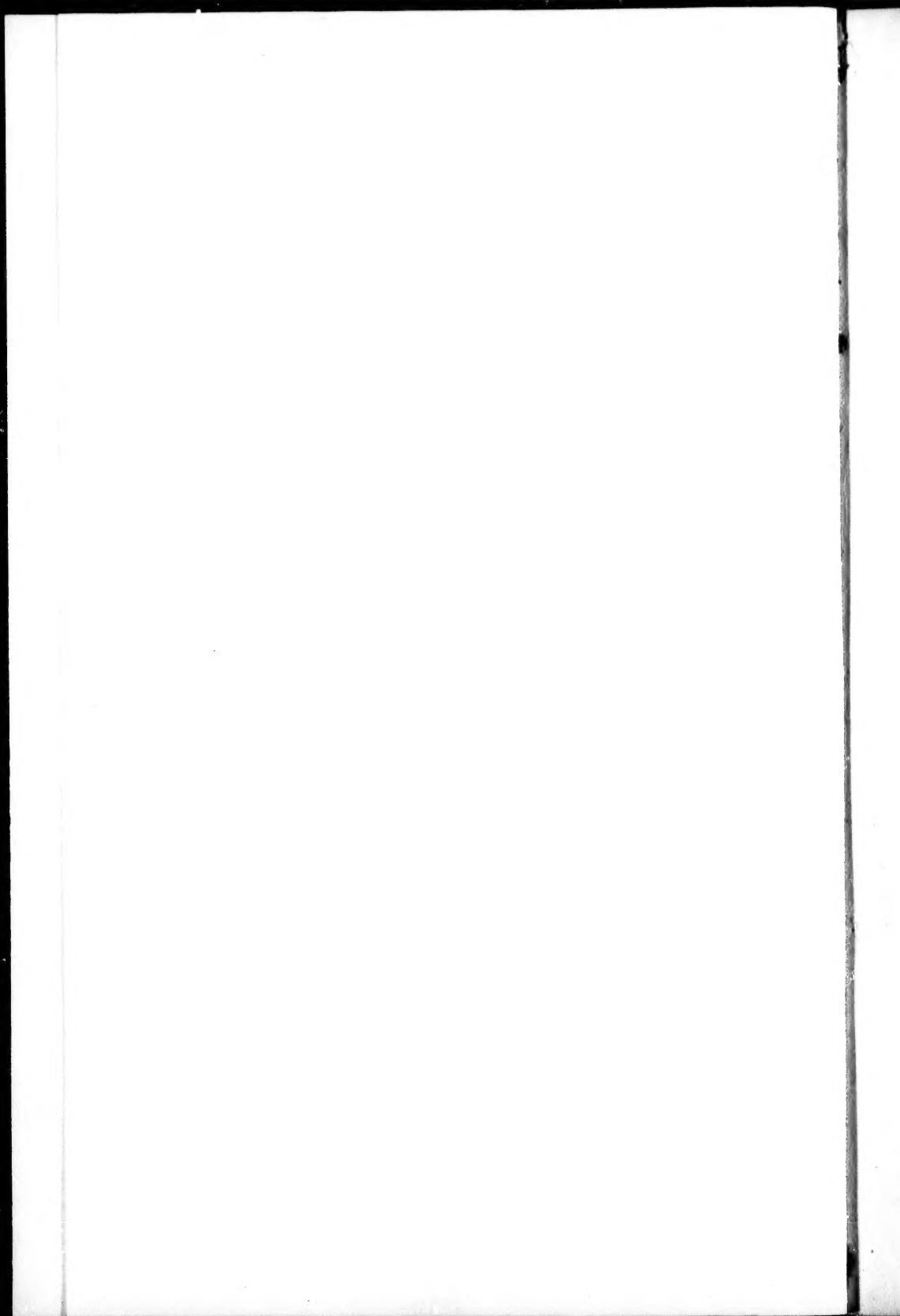




A

LETTER

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TO THE

EDITOR OF THE CHURCH;

IN ANSWER TO HIS REMARKS ON THE

REV. THOMAS POWELL'S

ESSAY ON APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION.

BY MATTHEW RICHEY, A. M.

KINGSTON, 1843.

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PRELIMINARY CORRESPONDENCE.

The subjoined preliminary correspondence affords a sufficient, and perhaps the most appropriate, explanation of the motives by which I am actuated in coming forward as the Rev. Mr. Powell's apologist ; and at the same time evinces the necessity imposed upon me of publishing my defence in the present form.

Kingston, 22nd November, 1843.

REVEREND SIR,—

I have read the articles that have appeared in the two last numbers of the *Church*, relating to the Rev. Mr. Powell's Essay on Apostolical Succession. I confess I am grieved at the unjustifiable acrimony and palpable violations of the laws of Christian charity by which they are conspicuously marked ; and conceiving it to be my duty to submit some remarks to the public in vindication of the impugned honor of my friend, as well as of the cause with which his name has become so prominently connected, I am desirous of ascertaining whether you will permit me to do so in the pages of your Journal.

I am, Reverend Sir,

Yours respectfully,

MATTHEW RICHEY.

The REV. DR. BETHUNE.

Cobourg, November 24th, 1843.

REVEREND SIR,—

In the autumn of 1837, the Bishop of Toronto (then Arch-deacon of York) found it necessary to animadvert upon certain proceedings of the Kirk of Scotland, in which the Hon. Wm. Morris bore a prominent share ; and Mr. Morris, as you may recollect, requested that I would permit his reply to those animadversions to be inserted in "The Church." I declined this request and gave my reasons at some length for doing so ; reasons which, I beg to say, apply with at least equal force to the comments or explanations you propose to furnish in answer to a recent review of Mr. Powell's Work on "Apostolical Succession." Moreover, I could not possibly pledge myself to the insertion of articles which I have not had the opportunity of reading.

If, upon the publication of the remarks which you propose to make, I should discover that you have made it apparent that Mr. Powell has, in any respect, been misunderstood or misrepresented, I shall be happy, as an act of justice, to insert such explanation ; but I must necessarily exercise my own judgment as to the success, or the reverse, of the attempt which is made to vindicate Mr. Powell.

My impression, at present, is that his work is palpably, and I fear wilfully, a dishonest one, and that it evinces no very latent hostility and dislike to the Church of England. Where such feelings and principles are apparent, a reviewer is justified in using a little plain severity, although it may unfortunately expose him to the charge of acrimony and uncharitableness.

I have the honor to be, Dear Sir,

Very truly and ob'ly. yours,

A. N. BETHUNE.

The REV. M. RICHEY.

LETTER, &c.

REVEREND SIR,—

Cicero, in his admirable disquisition *de Amicitia*, propounds it as a fundamental axiom in the laws of amity,—“never to require from a friend what he cannot grant without a breach of his honor; and always to be ready to assist him upon every occasion consistent with that principle. So long,” he continues, “as we shall act under the secure guard of this sacred barrier, it will not be sufficient merely to yield a ready compliance with his desires—we ought to *anticipate* and *prevent* them.”

I cannot divest myself of the impression that I should be justly liable to the imputation of practically repudiating this noble sentiment, so perfectly accordant with the system of evangelical morality, and with the spontaneous feelings of every well-constituted mind, were I to remain silent under the acrimonious attack you have made in your paper of the 10th and the 17th instant, upon a respectable minister of that branch of the Church of Christ to which I have the honour to belong; in which, for the ulterior purpose of neutralizing his influence as a writer, you most unwarrantably stigmatize his character as a Christian. That his celebrated *Essay on Apostolical Succession* should have occasioned palpitations of alarm in the ranks of the High Church party, and excited them to act vigorously on the defensive, no one who has glanced, however superficially, over its pages, can for a moment wonder: for whatever estimate may be formed of its literary merit, or of the range and accuracy of the research it evinces in the recondite lore of Patristic theology, there is one excellence which it unquestionably possesses in a very eminent degree;—it presents an array of facts and reasonings completely destructive of the exclusive claims of Episcopacy, of which no higher qualification is required to appreciate the overwhelming force, than plain common sense. It is on that account peculiarly adapted for the purposes of popular conviction, and has accordingly been widely effective. Hence the many sallies of indignation, and volleys of sophistry and

abuse, which Mr. Powell has been doomed to encounter from those whose citadel he has had the temerity to assail. All this, we confess, is perfectly natural, since even

"The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wand'ring near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign."

Nor was it by any means to be expected that you, Sir, whose well known zeal for the *succession* would seem to indicate a full conviction that it constitutes the Alpha and Omega of Christianity, should, under such circumstances, remain neutral; and just as little was I disappointed that at your hands the author of the Essay should receive no *mercy*. But surely even an opponent is entitled to something like *justice*. That unhallowed triumph which is achieved by a reckless endeavour to immolate character, is neither to be coveted nor envied. Such unworthy expedients have too often been the opprobrium of theological debate; and you are evidently unwilling they should become obsolete. Freely availing yourself of the "WEAPONS OF SCHISM," as your friend, Mr. Stopford, not inappropriately designates his performance, you are not content with representing Mr. Powell as a sciolist; in that supercilious style in which you are universally allowed to excel, you labour most strenuously to turn public odium upon him as a person devoid alike of christian principle and common probity. If the opprobrious colours in which you dipped your pencil when drawing his portrait are true to nature; if he is capable of the "unscriptural devices" and practices "directly iniquitous;" of the "unscrupulous employment of downright mutilation and falsification"—nay, moreover, of "imposture unparalleled perhaps in the annals of literary dishonesty and political legerdemain," which you attribute to him; if, to complete the beautiful climax, you "make him speak as a knave!" only because he has "laboured very zealously for that distinction"—then he is unworthy of an effort to defend him. Let merited obloquy be poured upon his head—let his name, if destined to live, descend on the roll of infamy; and, whenever it is mentioned, let those whose cause he has dishonoured by an alliance with such *Macchiavellian* policy crimson with conscious shame. But softly, my dear Sir! This species of logic forcibly reminds me of a certain preacher whom Dr. Jortin relates to have said in his hearing: "If any one denies the uninterrupted succession of

Bishops, I shall not scruple to call him a *downright Atheist*." The Doctor shrewdly adds, "He might have said *pawnbroker, smuggler, or pickpocket*. This, when I was young, was sound, orthodox, and fashionable doctrine." *

The estimable individual whom you represent as actuated by principles so detestible, has for many years sustained an unblemished reputation as a Minister of Christ. To the 'good report' he has obtained I believe him to be fully entitled; and neither the confidence with which you denounce him as an impostor and a knave, nor the speciousness of the grounds on which in some instances your assertions are predicated, has caused my faith in his christian rectitude to waver for a moment. Nor do I despair of being able to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of every impartial judge, that your allegations affecting his character, are without exception, aspersions as gratuitous as they are gross and invidious.

I have only further to premise, that as in my apprehension, the sacred claims of truth intimately coalesce with those of friendship in imposing upon me the duty to which I now address myself, I shall endeavour to discharge it with fidelity to both.

The leading design of your strictures on Mr. Powell's production is to convict him of palpable and deliberate dishonesty, in falsifying and perverting the testimony of Christian Antiquity on the question at issue betwixt him and the advocates of Episcopacy. A very grave charge certainly. It remains to be seen by what evidence you attempt to justify yourself in so confidently preferring it. Following the order which your observations prescribe—

I refer, first, to CLEMENT of ROME :—

"On the testimony of this father, "you tell us, "Mr. Powell *takes no high stand*." In this opinion, few I apprehend will be disposed readily to acquiesce, who have consulted his work for themselves; and why, entertaining that view yourself, you should have deemed it necessary to put forth so much strength to dislodge him from his position, I am unable to discover. A most injudicious "appellant to the early Church

*Jortin's Tracts, vol. 1, p. 436.

in favour of Presbyterian government" he would indeed have proved himself to be, had he *not* taken a high stand on one of the most valuable and authentic monuments of ecclesiastical antiquity, the Epistle of this Apostolic father to the Corinthian Church—a document fraught with illustrative allusions to the Christian ministry, not the less valuable as evidence for being purely incidental. That *Clement knew no difference between a Bishop and a Presbyter*, is the equally just and significant inference deduced by Mr. Powell from the facts, of which the epistle in question supplies abundant confirmation, namely—that the appellations *Bishop* and *Presbyter* are uniformly employed by him as equivalent; that he accordingly appropriates them indifferently to the same officers in the Church; and that *the only other* sacred order recognized by him is that of *Deacons*. Now this we think is taking a pretty high stand, though certainly not more elevated than tenable; and Mr. Powell is careful to fortify it by a variety of considerations, which, in our estimation at least, render it perfectly impregnable. Among these are, the observable coincidence of style on this topic between Clement and the writers of the New Testament; the fact that though the design of his epistle was to compose certain dissensions in the Church at Corinth, affording him thus a fair opportunity to refer to the peculiar prerogatives of the Bishop, had any such existed, not a syllable of reference to them drops from his pen—and that, moreover, he describes those dissensions as a sedition against the *Presbyters*, whom just before he calls *Bishops*; add to which, he never speaks of a *Bishop* in the *singular* number. Coincidences so numerous and striking afford more than presumptive evidence of the point they are adduced to establish.

Now in what manner do you meet the argument founded upon the incidental testimony thus furnished by Clement to the equality or rather *identity*, in his day, of *Bishops* and *Presbyters*? Do you appeal to the evidence of a solitary fact? No. Do you attempt by reasoning to invalidate the conclusion? Not at all. What then? Why, to solve the difficulty with which you evidently feel yourself pressed, you present us with an hypothesis entirely destitute of solidity, and indeed of every other species of merit, save the ingenuity with which, in the embarrassing absence of a better resource, it is adjusted to the exigency of the occasion. I shall bestow on that theory all the notice to which it is entitled in the sequel.

In the mean time, permit me to express my surprise that you should imagine us in any danger from taking Clement's testimony with its obvious and logical consequences, of derogating from the appropriate dignity of the Apostles. On our principles such a contingency is effectually precluded. We view the Apostles in their distinctive capacity, as occupying a high, honoured, and separated sphere of official glory, *which cannot be given to another*; as having had no *equals* while living, and no *successors* since. To your intimation that Clement "was *Bishop* of Rome at the very time he was pressing on his fellow Christians at Corinth the duty of ecclesiastical submission," it is sufficient to reply, the *Presbyters* of Ephesus were all *Bishops* at the very time Paul addressed them on the responsibilities of their charge; and they are so designated by him—"over which" says he, "the Holy Ghost hath made you *Episcopous Bishops*." (Acts xx. 28.) But like yourself, Sir, I had almost forgotten your declaration, that you "do not profess to weigh the merits of a Divine institution by the *laws of philology*;" a pretty intelligible indication of distrust in your cause, when subjected to the test of that species of legitimate criticism.

Aided however by Mr. Stopford, you "can distinguish in this Epistle" of St. Clement "a chief ruler of the Church with two orders of subordinate ministers, just as there was among the Jews, a High Priest, with a body of Priests and a body of Levites under him." If you have made such a discovery, I can only say, you must be endued with extraordinary powers of discrimination. It may be worth while for a moment to examine, whether what you confidently pronounce a discovery, is not a mere optical illusion produced by a deceptive medium of vision. Clement does, indeed, say, "for the *Chief Priest* has his proper services; and to the *Priests* their proper place is appointed; and to the *Levites* appertain their proper ministries: and the layman is confined within the bounds of what is enjoined upon laymen." But that is *not all* he says. Hear him out; and the way-faring man, though a fool, must immediately apprehend his meaning, and smile at Mr. Stopford's and your perversion of it. The venerable father continues—"Let every one of you therefore, brethren, bless God in his proper station, with a good conscience, and with all gravity,

not exceeding the rule of service appointed to him. *The daily sacrifices* are not offered every where; nor the *peace offerings*, nor the *sacrifices* appointed for *sins* and *transgressions*; but only at *Jerusalem*—they therefore who do any thing which is not agreeable to his will are punished with death. Consider, brethren, by *how much the better the knowledge* God has vouchsafed to us, by so much the greater danger are we exposed to." Can a single doubt now linger in any mind, that, in the phraseology to which you allude, he is speaking *not* of the *Christian Ministry*, but of the *Jewish Priesthood*, as he afterwards clearly indicates. If, nevertheless, you are determined to adhere to your own construction, we must insist upon your applying the same principle of interpretation to the entire passage. And where will the application of it to the "*sacrifices for sins and transgressions*" land you? In the central region of Popery, exhibiting the sanction of the first Apostolical father to THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS!—a dogma which the *Anglo-Catholic* school, I presume, is not *yet* quite prepared to digest. You cannot be ignorant that, in point of fact, this is a prominent use which Papal theologians make of the passage under review; nor would it be possible for you to expose the falaciousness of their inference, without abandoning the principle of exposition which you apply to the previous portion of it. For further satisfaction on this topic, I beg to refer you to an elaborate historico-theological dissertation, written by the erudite Buddeus, a leading object of which is to evince that Clement does not here favour the doctrine of *the sacrifice of the Mass*. The truth is, that your friend and you have totally misapprehended the sentiment of the passage, which is simply and obviously this:—that if it was imperative upon the *Jews* strictly to observe the institutions of the *law*, still more obligatory is it upon *Christians*, whom God has blessed with the superior light of the *Gospel*, to discharge the duties appropriate to their respective stations, with fidelity and order.

I must apologize for having occupied so much time in endeavouring correctly to appreciate the precise bearing and amount of Clement's testimony on the subject of this discussion. Its proximity to the times of the Apostles—the very general concurrence of sentiment among the learned as to its authenticity, and the fact that it was written *ex nomine Romanæ Ecclesiæ*, and therefore exhibits the united judgment

of the *uncorrupted* Church of Rome, as well as the writer's own sentiments—are considerations which stamp this document with pre-eminent value. I now dismiss it with the full conviction, in which I think every unbiassed mind must participate, that it presents not the faintest trace of the existence, in Clement's day, of an *order* of ministers superior to Presbyters. If such an innovation was even thought of at so early a period, it lay smouldering among the latent aspirations of ecclesiastical ambition, which subsequent ages indeed rapidly developed, but which had not then acquired a local habitation or a name.

I pass on with you, secondly, to the *IGNATIAN EPISTLES*. While the champions of *Pontifex Maximus* triumphantly eulogize these epistles as "one of the bulwarks of the Papedom," you as confidently pronounce Ignatius "a staunch Episcopalian," and characterise his testimony as "the strongest bulwark which primitive times have afforded to Episcopacy." Be this as it may,

"Non nostrum inter vos tantas componere lites."

My immediate concern is with your allegations respecting the unworthy treatment, which you allege these relics of antiquity have received at the hands of Mr. Powell. I may be excused, I suppose, from noticing the edifying sentiments which you *put into his mouth*, any further than simply to call attention to them, as affording an example of your exuberant charity.—Endorsing the statements, and glowing with the ardour of the Reviewer, you tell us: "Whatever has been done with Ignatius has been *wilful* and *intentional*. Clement only requires to be mistaken or misrepresented; but Ignatius can neither be mistaken nor misrepresented: he must be managed by *arts of a different kind*." The specific charges which you prefer against the writer of the Essay, in relation to the Ignatian epistles, are, *first*—a most dishonest effort to damage their character; and, *secondly*—falsification in the quotations he professes to give from Archbishop Wake's translation.

In attempting to make good the former, you commit several egregious offences against historical truth as well as controversial justice, which, since they are directly calculated to mislead the reader, who implicitly abandons himself to your guidance, it is necessary I should particularize. And *first*—you *mislead* the illiterate reader by assuming that all the questions touching those epistles of Ignatius, which *Usher* and *Pear-*

son contend are genuine, are regarded by the learned as finally settled. To evince how gratuitous and false such an assumption is, it will only be necessary to refer to two accomplished historians, than whom none are more entitled to deference on a point of ecclesiastical criticism. "The *whole question*," says Moshier, "relating to the epistles of Ignatius in general, seems to me to labour under *much obscurity*, and to be *embarrassed with many difficulties*."* "Certainly," observes Neander, "these epistles contain passages which at least bear completely upon them the character of antiquity. This is particularly the case with the passages directed against Judaism and Docetism; but *even the shorter and more trustworthy edition is very much interpolated*."† So remote are important questions relating to these epistles still, from *terra firma*! so little reason had you to feel indignant at Mr. Powell, for ushering them into notice with a salutary caveat. You *mislead* your reader, *secondly*—by *insinuating* that Bishop Pearson regarded even those epistles, in favour of which he considered the testimony of antiquity exhibited in his *Vindiciæ Ignatianæ*, decisive, exempt from interpolation—an insinuation at direct variance with fact. You *greatly mislead* your reader, *thirdly*, by affirming the *accuracy* of what you call the "*genuine* Latin translation of them," which Archbishop Usher, after much research, discovered in the Library of Caius College, Cambridge; and which you tell us corresponds with the Greek M.S. copy, found by the celebrated *Vossius*. These are most extraordinary assertions; and I hesitate not to say utterly insusceptible of proof. The *genuine* Latin translation found by Usher *accurate*! This statement, as any one acquainted with this department of investigation must be aware, is altogether erroneous. That that version is much less vitiated than the one before in his possession, is true; that an inspection of it confirmed his previous suspicions in regard to the other, and materially aided him in correcting it, is also true: but that he found or *regarded* it immaculate, or in perfect accord with the most approved Greek text, is utterly *untrue*. So wide is this of the real facts of the case, that, by collating the one with the other, and *both* with the Greek text, the learned Archbishop detected in *both many additions and interpolations*, which he has carefully marked by red lines drawn

*Ecc. Hist. Cent. 1, part 2, chap 2.

†Hist. three first Encl. of Christ Church, p. 410 (Philad. Ed.)

under them in the edition he himself published ; and the most valuable notes he has appended to the work actually relate to those discrepancies.* These are positions of which I challenge refutation. What then ? Because your unsuspecting reader is imposed upon, and receives an unjust bias from your misrepresentations on points vitally affecting the question in debate, shall I accuse you of *wilful* and *intentional* deception ? Shall I stigmatise you as a consummate adept in artifice, doing evil that good may come ? God forbid. * can easily imagine, that treading upon ground with which you were not very familiar, you incautiously permitted the ardour of your feelings to precipitate you to conclusions, for which charity itself can suggest no better apology, than your manifestly incompetent knowledge of the subject.

You alledge that "amongst other artifices, Mr. Powell applies to the epistles in question the objections that were made by Archbishop Usher to a *false translation of them*." By the epistles *in question*, you of course mean those vindicated by Bishop Pearson, mentioned in the preceding sentence ; for surely you would not injure the reputation of a Father whom you so much venerate, by contending for the *larger* ones. Here again, as if by a species of fatality, you involve yourself in palpable error, and Mr. Powell in unmerited censure. His remarks, (as you might have readily ascertained by consulting his work) like those of the Archbishop, relate to a Latin version, comprising not seven, but *twelve*, epistles attributed to this Father, of which that eminently holy and learned Prelate pronounced six to be suppositious, and the rest in many places corrupted by interpolation. And let it be distinctly remembered, so far was he

*Hanc nostrum, non tam conjecturam, quam assertionem verissimam, confirmatam dabit Reverendiss. *Jacobus Usseus. Archiepiscopus Armachanus, Hiberniæ Primas*, vir non solum doctissimus Ecclesiasticæ antiquitatis scrutator diligentissimus, sed etiam sincerae pietatis cultor eximius, & assertor ; in quo, cum eruditione summa, certant candor et humanitas, quam hoc ipso tempore in eo experior, is mihi communicavit novam editionem Epistolar. Ignatii, quam subjecit prælo Oxoniensi, in qua non solum supposititias Epistolas à genuinis separat ; sed eas etiam ipsas, quas pro Ignatianis habemus, ostendit varie fuisse interpolatis, ex collatione duorum exemplarium MSS. Latinae interpretationis, quam contulit, cum exemplari Græco edito ; et additiones, quæ in Latinis illis codicibus non habentur, mineatis lineis, in textu distinxit, accuratissime ; additis etiam notis doctissimis. *Rivets Critici Sacri, Lib. 2, ch. 1.*

from maintaining that those to which he has affixed his sanction as genuine, have escaped the deteriorating process to which, it is matter of notoriety, nearly all the uninspired monuments of christian antiquity have, in their transmission to us, been subjected, that he not merely maintained, but *demonstrated*, the *contrary*. In short, the almost unanimous judgment of eminent critics upon this topic, is embodied in the words of that distinguished ornament of your own Church, who was no friend to dissent, Doctor Jortin: "But though the shorter epistles be on many accounts preferable to the larger, yet I will not affirm that they have undergone no alteration." * It is but just however to add, that any thing but union exists among the learned in respect to the *extent* of that alteration. Nor are these observations inapplicable to the Greek text; as the detailed collations exhibited by the incomparable Rivetus, in the work to which I have already referred, amply attest. In such perplexing incertitude are we involved, whenever we exchange the unshaded light that beams from "the holy oracle," for the misty atmosphere of ecclesiastical antiquity. Our surest and best protection against that perplexity, with its interminable train of attendant evils, would be an unreserved and practical adoption of the noblest sentiment attributed to Ignatius, and which is worth all the rest of his writings put together—"MY ANTIQUITY IS JESUS CHRIST."

Reluctant though I am to impugn motives, when even on the largest scale of allowance to human infirmity, they are susceptible of a favourable construction, I acknowledge my inability to conciliate with rectitude of intention the expedient employed by Mr. Stopford, and in the imagined success of which you evidently feel exultant, to convict Mr. Powell of falsification in quoting from Archbishop Wake's translation. An impression of the justice of the imputation is indeed very likely to be obtruded upon the credulity of the reader, by the imposing array of quotations you have paraded in your page in order to give it full effect. But I hope to satisfy every impartial judge that your triumph is premature; and that the odium of inexcusable disingenuousness falls not on Mr. Powell, but on his accuser. The *radical fallacy* of the attempt, by which you labour to sustain the charge of dishonesty against my clerical friend in respect to those citations consists in very

* Remarks on Ecc. Hist. vol. I, page 357.

conveniently overlooking his *explicitly avowed* object in bringing them forward. What was that object? In language as lucid and unequivocal as can well be conceived, he thus expresses it:—"Whatever he (Ignatius) makes of Bishops, he yet makes Presbyters as high as we can desire for our argument." In your version of his object, the words, "*Whatever he makes of Bishops*," and also the significant conjunction "*yet*," are entirely omitted—a mutilation of his words that indeed admirably subserves *your* design, but completely falsifies *his*. I know not in what light you may regard such unpardonable perversion in an Episcopalian, but I can easily imagine the terms of execration in which you would denounce it in a Non-conformist. And such *honourable* means employed, forsooth, to fix upon Mr. Powell the stigma of dishonesty! I have not done with this matter. In order to place it in the clearest possible light, I shall exhibit the citations from Apb. Wake's translation of Ignatius, as you have yourself given them, marking in Italics the portions of them cited by Mr. Powell; only begging to apprise the reader of the importance of bearing in mind Mr. Powell's design, according to his own version, not according to your *per-version*, of it:—

'My fellow servant, Sotio, *the deacon* in whom I rejoice, forasmuch as he is *subject unto his Bishop* as to the grace of God, and to *the Presbytery as to the law of Jesus Christ*.'

'I exhort you that ye study to do all things in a divine concord; your Bishop presiding in the place of God; *your Presbyters in the place of the Council of the Apostles*; and your deacons, most dear to me, being entrusted with the ministry of Jesus Christ.'

'It is, therefore, necessary that as ye do so without your Bishop, ye should do nothing; also *be ye subject to your Presbyters, as to the Apostles of Jesus Christ our hope*, in whom, if we walk, we shall be found in him; the deacons also, as being the ministers of the mysteries of Jesus Christ, must by all means please all.'

'In like manner, *let all reverence the deacons, as Jesus Christ*; and the Bishop as the Father; and *the Presbyters as the Sanhedrim of God and college of the Apostles*.—WITHOUT THESE THERE IS NO CHURCH.'

'Being subject to your Bishop as to the command of God, and so likewise to the Presbytery.'

‘*See that ye all follow your Bishop, as Jesus Christ (followed) the Father, and the Presbyters as the Apostles; and reverence the deacons as the command of God.*”

Now is it not manifest, as Mr. Powell states, that “*what-ever,*” in these passages or elsewhere, Ignatius “*makes of Bishops, he yet makes Presbyters as high as we can desire for our argument?*” What opponent of the *succession* ever ascribed higher authority to the Presbytery than to *the law of Christ*; elevated it above *the Council of the Apostles*; represented its members as entitled to greater deference than *the Apostles of Jesus Christ our hope*, or exhorted ail to reverence them more profoundly than *as the Sanhedrim of God, and college of the Apostles*? *Whatever* then may be said of Bishops, who, I ask, among the most tenacious sticklers for the dignity of Presbyters, ever dreamed of investing them with more august attributes, —of honouring them with more magnificent titles? Make of Bishops *what you please*, or let Ignatius make of them *what he may*, is not all this *quite enough for our argument*? And by what principle of justice, or indeed of propriety, was Mr Powell bound in relation to the quotations in question to do more than exhibit what was really relevant to the position he proposed to establish—a position which, on the very face of it, *admits* that Ignatius makes a distinction between Bishops and Presbyters, and freely accords to Episcopalians, for the sake of argument, the full benefit of that admission—a position, let me emphatically add, *not in the slightest degree invalidated* by any thing contained in your ampler citations. The imputation of dishonesty in this affair to Mr. Powell is thus left without the shadow of a pretext. I am anxious, and from my appreciation of your character strongly inclined, to believe that *you never read the work*, upon which you have animadverted with so much acrimony and injustice; but that, confidently resigning yourself to the conduct of Mr. Stopford, you mistook his “*WEAPONS OF SCHISM*” for lawful instruments, and wielded them unwittingly against *idolum cerebri*, or rather employed them to “*beat a fellow servant*” without a cause. If I am not mistaken in this conjecture, then your transgression comes under the denomination of “*sins of ignorance,*” and may be partially atoned for by prompt and unreserved confession; but, if unrepentingly persisted in, it will assume the more malignant aspect of those for which the law provides no expiation.

Had Mr. Powell made those quotations for the purpose of evincing, whether professedly or by insidious implication, that Ignatius, like Clement, recognizes no religious functionaries superior to Presbyters, there would have existed some ostensible ground for so unceremoniously ordering him to the pillory as a *knave*. In that case even, you might with a great deal more propriety have designated him a *fool*; and then, without compromising your own principles, have benevolently saved his *moral* character, by extending to him the plenary indulgence usually accorded to *mental* imbecility. For assuredly, *no one but a fool*, could, in opposing Episcopacy, *think* of falsifying the epistles of Ignatius, in the hope of escaping detection, and that an *English translation* of them too!—*seven* epistles with which literate High Churchmen seem much better acquainted, than with the Epistles of the ascended SAVIOUR to the *seven* Churches in Asia.

In regard to the admitted and palpable distinction indicated by the Ignatian epistles between Bishops and Presbyters, I may here remark, that it involves various contested points which of themselves constitute a separate and important branch of this controversy. *When* did that distinction originate? *What* was its precise nature and extent? and *Whence* was it—from Heaven? or of men? are questions concerning which the disputants maintain widely different views. One *historical* solution of these difficulties we have, and *only one*; and since on a subject of this nature—a matter of fact—all theories and conjectures must give way to *authentic history*, that solution demands the admission of every unprejudiced enquirer after truth. I refer to the testimony of JEROME, to whom, the learned generally concur with Erasmus, in awarding the palm of erudition and eloquence. In his commentary on Titus, 1, 5, *That thou shou shouldest ordain Presbyters in every city, as I have appointed thee*, his words (mark them well) are as follows:—*“What sort of Presbyters ought to be

* “Qui qualis Presbyter debeat ordinari, in consequentibus disserens hoc ait: Si quis est sine crimine, unius uxoris vir,” et caetera: postea intulit, “Oportet n. Episcopum sine crimine esse, tanquam Dei dispensatorem” Idem est ergo Presbyter qui est Episcopus: et antequam, *diaboli instinctu* studia in religione fierent, et diceretur in populis: “Ego sum Pauli, ego Apollo, ego autem Cephæ:” *communi Presbyterorum consilio* ecclesiae gubernabantur. Postquam vero unusquisque eos, quos baptizaverat, suos putaba tesse, non Christi: *in toto orbe decretum est, ut*

ordained he shows afterwards—*If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, &c.* and then adds, *for a Bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God, &c.* A *Presbyter*, therefore, is the same as a *Bishop*: and before there were, *by the instigation of the devil*, parties in religion, and it was said among different people, *I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas*, the churches were governed by the *joint counsel of the Presbyters*. But afterwards, when every one accounted those whom he baptized as belonging to himself and not to Christ, it was decreed throughout the whole world, that one, chosen from among the *Presbyters*, should be put over the rest, and that the whole care of the church should be committed to him, and the seeds of schisms taken away.

‘Should any one think that this is my private opinion, and not the doctrine of the Scriptures, let him read the words of the apostle in his epistle to the *Philippians*, ‘Paul and Timothy, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons,’ &c. Philippi is a *single city of Macedonia*; and certainly in

unus de Presbyteris electus superponeretur cæteris, ad quem omnia ecclesie cura pertineret, et schismatum semina tollerentur. Putet aliquis non scripturatum, sed nostram, esse sententiam Episcopum et Presbyterum unum esse; et aliud ætatis, aliud esse nomen officii: relegat Apostoli ad Philippenses verba dicentis: Paulus et Timotheus servi Jesu Christi, omnibus sanctis in Christo Jesu, qui sunt Philippis, cum Episcopis et Diaconis, gratia vobis et pax, et reliqua. Phillippi una est urbs Macedonia: et certe in una civitate plures et nuncupantur *Episcopi non esse poterant*. Sed quia eosdem Episcopos illo tempore quos et Presbyteros appellabant, propterea indifferenter de Episcopis quasi de Presbyteris est locutus. Adhuc hoc alicui videatur ambiguum, nisi altero testimonio comprobetur. In Actibus Apostolorum scriptum est, quod cum venisset Apostolus Miletum, miserit Ephesum, et vocaverit Presbyteros ecclesie ejusdem, quibus postea inter cætera sit locutus; *attendite vobis, et omni gregi in quo vos Spiritus sanctus posuit Episcopos, pascere ecclesiam Domini quam acquisivit per sanguinem suum*. Et hoc diligentius observate, quo modo unus civitatis Ephesi Presbyteros vocans, postea eosdem Episcopos dixerit—Hæc propterea, ut ostenderemus apud veteres eosdem fuisse Presbyteros quos et Episcopos. Paulatim vero, ut dissensionum plantaria evellerent, ad unum omnem sollicitudinem esse delatam.—Sicut ergo Presbyteri sciunt se ex ecclesie consuetudine ei, qui sibi propositus fuerit, esse subjectos, ita Episcopi noverint se magis consuetudine quem dispositionis dominicæ veritate, Presbyteris esse majores.

HIERONYMI COM. in Tit. I. 1. Opp. Tom. VI.
p. 168. ed Victorii, Paris, 1623, Fol.

one city there could not be *several bishops*, as they are now styled; but as they, at that time, called the very same persons bishops whom they called Presbyters, the Apostle has spoken without distinction of bishops as Presbyters.

‘Should this matter yet appear doubtful to any one, unless it be proved by an additional testimony; it is written in the acts of the Apostles, that when Paul had come to Miletum, he sent to Ephesus and called the Presbyters of that church, and among other things said to them, ‘take heed to yourselves and to all the flock in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops.’ Take particular notice, that calling the PRESBYTERS of the single city of Ephesus, he afterwards names the same persons BISHOPS. ‘Our intention in these remarks is to show that among the ancients, *Presbyters and Bishops were the very same*. But that BY LITTLE AND LITTLE, that the plants of dissensions might be plucked up, the whole concern was devolved upon an individual. As the Presbyters, therefore, know that they are subjected, BY THE CUSTOM OF THE CHURCH, to him who is set over them; so let the Bishops know, that they are greater than Presbyters MORE BY CUSTOM than BY ANY REAL APPOINTMENT OF CHRIST.”

The stubborn *historical facts*, so luminously stated by Jerome in this important passage, and which he challenges the whole world to refute, annihilate at once your hypothesis as to the original form of Church government noticed on a previous page, by demonstrating that her prelatical constitution was not established by *divine right*, but is an innovation on primitive order, introduced by *degrees ‘paulatim,’* till at length, it acquired the coherence of a fully developed system, and fortified its claims by the authority of prescriptive *usage*.

There is a sad progressiveness, according to your account, in Mr. Powell’s course of delinquency. Obdurate by the habit of bearing false witness, he proceeds to the ruthless work of decapitation!

“Nemo repente fit turpissimus.”

He strikes off the head of a passage of your favorite Father, and that too when in the very act of settling the whole question in dispute, by a single enunciation. How fortunate, Dear Sir, that by your prompt and skilful interference, it has been put on again, and that from its adhesive and vital properties, we may

now survey the *as sublime* of that passage in its primal dignity. Let us look at it:—"See that ye follow *your Bishop, as Jesus Christ followed the Father*; and the Presbytery as the Apostles; and reverence the deacons as the command of God."—This sentence, italicised in accordance with your wishes, repels, you think, the interpretation which Mr. Powell attaches to the term "lawful" in the sequel of the passage, as denoting nothing more than a *human* arrangement, by "establishing the sacred origin and authority of Episcopacy in very distinct language." Now permit me to say, that although to *you* this may be perfectly obvious, yet as *we* do not regard Ignatius (giving him credit for this singular prescription) entitled to the same profound deference with the *inspired* writers, we cannot recognize his authority as sufficient to establish the sacred—if by sacred you mean *divine*—origin, of any doctrine or institution of our holy religion, *any* farther than he can be shown to *speak as the oracles of God*; believing, as we do, "that whatsoever is not *read* THEREIN, nor may be *proved* THEREBY, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." And were we in the present instance, to admit his authority as decisive, what advantage would you gain by the concession? None that we can perceive, but the reverse, since it is manifest if the sentence referred to proves anything, it proves that not Bishops, but *Presbyters*, are the true successors of the Apostles.

Mr. Powell having cited from Ignatius the following general proposition, intended to enforce due respect and submission to the authority of the Bishop, "WHATEVER the Bishop shall *approve* of, that is *pleasing to God*," proceeds to reason from it thus:—"Now it is clear that he makes the power or authority of the Bishop, in *restraining* and in *permitting*, to be equal. Whatever he could *prohibit* the Presbyters from doing, he could equally *appoint* and *approve* of their doing the same thing. He could *restrain* them from *baptizing*, and he could *appoint* them to *baptize*. His authority in both respects was equal. Apply this to *ordaining* Ministers. Suppose he could *restrain* Presbyters from *ordaining*, he could equally *appoint* them to *ordain* Ministers; and then the performance of this duty WOULD 'BE PLEASING TO GOD.' Then Presbyters, as *Presbyters*, have as much *inherent* power to

ORDAIN as they have to *baptize*, or to do ANY THING else in the Church. This is clearly the doctrine of Ignatius." Thus far the author of the "WEAPONS OF SCHISM" gives Mr. Powell's words, and here he makes a dead and ominous pause, dexterously parrying the dreaded point of the *argumentum ad hominem*, with which Mr. Powell brings the preceding reasoning home to the business and bosoms of the advocates of prelacy; but which pungent application, Mr. Stopford deemed it most prudent to *suppress*. Singular inconsistency truly, in one to whose sensitive conscience the very semblance of artifice is so abhorrent! We trust, however, to the reader's candour and sense of justice, to take the *close* of Mr. Powell's argument in connexion with its *commencement*, and then, without any solicitude about the result, we shall leave him to form his own judgment of its real value. "Now," continues Mr. Powell, "all Churchmen allow they have the power and authority *as Presbyters to baptize*. They have, therefore, from the principles of Ignatius, power and authority to *ordain Ministers, to confirm, &c.*, as much as Bishops have. The only difference was, that, for the *honour* of the Bishop and by *ecclesiastical arrangement*, they were not to do these things without the *permission* of the Bishop."

Not satisfied with casting the very pith of Mr. Powell's argument into the shade, Mr. Stopford tries to invalidate the force of that portion of it, which he is pleased to exhibit, by tracing the absurdities to which the position that forms its basis legitimately leads; apparently forgetting, that for those consequences, Ignatius, not Mr. Powell, is responsible. How much more satisfactory would it have been to discerning minds, for Mr. Stopford to have fairly met and grappled with his antagonist's argument in its *unbroken* form, than to throw dust in the reader's eyes by such wretched evasions: *sed hic labor, hoc opus est*.

I proceed briefly to notice the testimony of POLYCARP:—No writing of Christian antiquity, since the completion of the sacred canon, has come down to us with less disputable claims to our unsuspecting confidence, both as to genuineness and authenticity, than the Epistle to the Philippians, written by this venerable disciple of the Apostle John. Those claims are sufficiently established by Photius, in his celebrated *Bibliotheca* (No. 126), written in the ninth century, and containing

a critical examination of 280 ancient writers. He justly characterises Polycarp's Epistle as replete with salutary admonitions, and as bearing impressed upon it, in regard to style as well as sentiment, the signatures of antiquity. With this view the judgment of that illustrious scholar, Fr. Spanhem, by no means disposed to be credulous on such questions, fully accords: "*Nec in hoc quicquàm,*" he observes, "*quod a simplicitate ejus ævi recedere videatur.*"* Lardner and Paley pronounce it of undoubted genuineness; and the learned Neander, whose penetrating and practised eye has explored every nook of ecclesiastical antiquity, acquiesces in the same opinion. Extremely few, in fact, of any eminence as critics, have agitated a doubt upon the subject. How different the history of criticism in respect to the Ignatian epistles, whose number has at various times risen and fallen, and which no one of *any* party asserts, or can assert, to be pure from interpolation.

I make these remarks simply to show, that not merely do we *admit*, as you cautiously intimate Mr. Powell does, the genuineness of this precious fragment of the writings of Polycarp, but that we cordially recognize it; and that, in giving it, as a *testimony*, our decided preference to the epistles of Ignatius, we are justified by the best writers of your own, as well as other Churches. But this epistle, you inform us, was written as an accompaniment to those of Ignatius, and is therefore a standing monument of their genuineness and authenticity. There are, however, unfortunately, two drawbacks to the veritableness of this statement: *First*—you assume that *all* the writings of Ignatius in question were sent by Polycarp with his own letter, for which you can produce no historical authority: and *secondly*, you lost sight of a fact, of which you might have been reminded by looking into the first volume of Lardner's *Credibility*, namely, that it is not quite certain whether those epistles of Ignatius, are the same that were read by Irenæus, Origin and Usebius, or not. Neither does it appear that *any* of them were autographs; these, it would seem, having been conveyed to their respective destinations by the Christians who attended him on his journey to Rome, and who gave money to his guards, that he might be permitted to write them. Before you charged Mr. Powell

**Introd. Ad. Hist. Nov. Test. Sæc. 2.*

with ignorance on these topics, it would not have been amiss for you to have qualified yourself for the functions of your censorship, by acquiring a more extended and accurate knowledge of them yourself. But the manner in which these points are settled cannot affect Polycarp's testimony on the question now under discussion—a testimony, it is hardly necessary to say, perfectly coincident with that of Clement. Like him, Polycarp evinces an utter unconsciousness of more than two orders of Ministers in the Church; and by exhorting the Philippians, chap. v., to be subject to their *Presbyters* and *deacons* as to God and CHRIST, he indisputably precludes the idea of any higher functionary to whom they owed ecclesiastical submission. "He could go no higher for a similitude; nor could he decently have gone so high, had he known of a higher order in the Church. Not a syllable of the Bishop, who, in less than a hundred and fifty years after, would have been the principal, if not the only, person to whom their subjection would have been enjoined by any Christian writer."

On a review of the most unexceptionable evidence deducible from the writings of the apostolic fathers, in relation to the orders of ministers in the Church, in the age immediately succeeding the times of the Apostles, it must, I think, be apparent to all who have eyes to see, that none was then known superior to Presbyters; and that therefore, whatever distinction was subsequently introduced, originated not by *divine right*, but by conventional appointment. The presbyterial hypothesis therefore manifestly accords with the exemplified constitution of the primitive Church. And it derives no slight confirmation of its truth from the inextricable perplexity and mutual contentions in which the rejection of it involves Episcopalians. Dodwell, one of the staunchest advocates of prelacy, repudiates the notion that there was a Bishop in the world, save James at Jerusalem, whom he represents as a universal Bishop, or species of Pope, at the time when Clement and Polycarp wrote their epistles. Dr. Hammond maintains that the Presbyters mentioned by Clement, were all Bishops, and that there was no middle order of Presbyters in the Church at that time; while Dr. Burnet contends, in opposition to both, "that Clement mentions Bishops *and* Presbyters, and he means Presbyters by Deacons.* At least an equal number

* Dr. Mitchell's, *Primitive Truth and Order*, page 89.

of theories have been framed to elude the plain and obvious inference from St. Paul's omission of any reference to Presbyters as distinguished from Bishops in his Epistle to the Phillippians. Taking leave now of the apostolic fathers, we pass down the stream of time to the writings of IRENÆUS:—

In reiterating with indefatigable pertinacity your wonted charges of fraud and artifice against Mr. Powell, in respect to this author, there is a confusion in your remarks which renders it difficult to analyze or apprehend them. And here you have permitted your impetuosity to involve you in the humiliating blunder of self-contradiction. Mr. Powell, we are told, “gives a passage from Book iii. chap. ii., in which Irenæus speaks of ‘the successions of Presbyters in the Churches;’ then to show that Irenæus used the word Bishop *synonymously*, he says, that in the next chapter, he calls this succession the *succession of Bishops*.” These are his words as cited by yourself; and yet, mirabile dictu! you wind up your remarks on this head, by asserting that Mr. Powell declares that Irenæus, in speaking of the individuals who presided over the Churches, *never uses any other name* than that of Presbyter.” We cease to wonder at your misrepresenting him, when you are so palpably inconsistent with yourself. There is indeed one Church, the Church of Rome, in reference to which Mr. Powell says specifically, that Irenæus in his Epistle to Victor, never calls the presiding ministers Bishops: can you evince the contrary? The passage has an important bearing on the general question; and we shall therefore permit Mr. Powell to speak for himself:—

“In the very celebrated Epistle, above-mentioned, to Victor, Bishop of Rome, he speaks of Anicetus, Pius, Hyginus, Telesphorus, and Xystus, *presiding as Presbyters* over the Church of Rome; though these persons, by later writers, are all reckoned as Bishops of Rome. These Presbyters are all, even by Papists and high Churchmen, put as *links* into the succession *chain*: they have no chain without them. He repeats the same mode of speaking of these Presiding Presbyters three times over in this letter, though a short one, and *NEVER uses any other*—never calls them Bishops. He uses the word Bishops as to the Asiatics; but not as to the Romans; which would almost lead one to think that the term Presbyter, at Rome, in that age, was *still* considered the *most honourable denomination*, as it certainly seems to have been in the Apostles’ days, and for some time after.”

Had Irenæus anticipated the agitation of the question as to whether he meant to employ the term Bishop and Presbyter synonymously, we cannot conceive how he could have supplied a more apposite and conclusive argument, to settle the matter in the affirmative, than is embodied by him in the following words :—" Wherefore obedience ought to be rendered to those who are *Presbyters* in the Church, who have as we have shown, *succession from the Apostles*, and who, with the succession of *their Episcopacy*, have a sure deposit of the truth divinely granted to them, according to the good pleasure of our Heavenly Father."* I can regard in no other light than as a specimen of egregious trifling, your ostentatious display of the passage in Irenæus Lib. 4, in referring to which, Mr. Powell freely grants every thing you *can prove* by it. And what, I ask, was the author's main design in that passage? To prove a *personal* succession from the Apostles? No; but to prove the uninterrupted succession of the "faith which was once delivered to the Saints," the *very succession* in which we glory. "But" says Irenæus, "when we appeal to that tradition which has been preserved to us *per successiones Presbyterorum*, by the *succession of Presbyters*, in the Churches, they" (the propagators of false doctrines) "presume they are wiser not only than the Presbyters, but even than the Apostles, and that they have found THE TRUTH in a purer form."†

I have now become so accustomed to the bursts of your indignation, and they have hitherto proved so perfectly impotent, that the opprobrious accusations of "dishonesty" and of "direct and premeditated falsehood," with which you usher TERTULLIAN into notice, instead of exciting alarm, inspire me with confidence.—Before referring to the passage Mr. Powell has passed over in silence, but to which Mr. Stopford has given due prominence, as an inexpugnable argument in favour of the "*succession*," I shall briefly notice your well meant attempts to assist Mr. Powell in the critical task of translation. Fault is found with him, in the first place, for giving "*faith*" as the meaning of the term "*sacramenti*"—a word, we are informed, "including all the solemn rites of religion as it was then used." On this correction I have to remark,

*Lib. iv. chap. 43. †Lib. 3, chap. 2.

that it does not evince a very intimate knowledge of the *usus loquendi* of the ancient fathers. It is well known to all who have passed their novitiate in this department of learning, that they most commonly use this term to designate "all articles *peculiar* to *Christian faith*; as well as all duties of religion *containing that which sense or natural reason cannot of itself discern*." To illustrate this by example, take the term in the meaning which you assign to it, and translate it in the following passage from Tertullian: "Let us guard that SACRAMENTUM of our constitution, which establishes the unity in Trinity, recognizing three—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; but of one substance, of one condition, of one power, because they are one God."* Take an example also from Jerome: "*Velum scissum est, et omnia Legis SACRAMENTA, quæ prius tegebantur, prodita sunt*."† It is unnecessary to multiply references. (See Gesneri Linguæ Latinæ Thesaurus, in voce.) You must be satisfied on reflection, that your unguarded adoption of Mr. Stopford's *extremely erroneous criticism* is not calculated to add to your literary reputation. Mr. Powell is perfectly correct. No term more appropriate than *faith*, could have been selected to express the sense of *sacramenti* in the passage quoted by him, as its entire scope, and the *usus loquendi* in the writings of the fathers, most perspicuously indicate.

Your animadversion on the passage, "*Præsent probati quiquæ seniores, honorum istum non pretis, sed testimonio, adepti; neque enim pretio ulla res Dei constat*"—is equally infelicitous, and still more inexcusable. Proceed upon that scheme of interpretation, and you will transform, not only the face, but the import, of a large proportion of the passages in which '*seniores*' occurs in the Latin Vulgate; and in many cases make the best theological writers in Latin utter unintelligible jargon; writers who as little imagined—as did Tertullian—when they used the word *seniores* to designate Presbyters *officially*, they would be understood simply as meaning, *persons advanced in years*! Your translation of *testimonio*, is not only novel, but inadmissible. It properly signifies *evidence, deposition*; and Mr. Powell's rendering of it, though free, is faithful, and distinguished by idiomatic propriety. Few besides

*Tertul. adv. Praxean. †In Matth. c. xxvii. 27.

yourself, it is apprehended, will discover any analogy between the *official* act of a Presbytery, expressed by *testimonio*, and the terms "well reported of," by which St. Luke notices the favourable opinion prevalent concerning Timothy.

But it is time to hear the *testimonium* of Tertullian, for overlooking which Mr. Powell is visited with such unmeasured reproach:—"This way the Apostolical Churches calculate the series of their Bishops, as it is related that Polycarp was placed by St. John in the Church of the Smyrnæans; as also that Clement was ordained in that of the Romans by St. Peter; as moreover, the rest also exhibit as *grafts* of Apostolic seed, being appointed to the Episcopate by the Apostles. Can Heretics feign any such thing?" "Here," says Mr. Stopford, "the succession was of single individuals in Churches, in which we know there were many individuals; and this was a thing appointed and settled by the Apostles themselves, in all the Churches they founded." It was doubtless, we reply, a succession of individuals; but the distinctly avowed design of the enumeration was to establish, in opposition to Heretics, the fact of the *transmission of the uncorrupted Gospel of Christ*, through the organ of *faithful* men, from the times of the Apostles. That fact was as fully established by this method as if Tertullian had undertaken the impracticable task of giving a list of every Presbyter in every distinct Church. Mr. Stopford sees nothing here but a *personal* succession, designed to vindicate the divine right of Bishops; although nothing could be more remote from the intention of Tertullian, who employs this argument to evince that the *depositum of the doctrine*, entrusted to the Apostles had been kept inviolate, while the Heretics, against whom he argues, had grossly corrupted it, by the admixture of legendary tradition, and extravagant and seducing speculations. And, after all, as to anything approaching certainty in regard to this succession, it is really most vain to appeal with triumph to the testimonies of Irenæus or Tertullian, or to any or all ancient writers, on the subject. The pretensions of the Church of Rome, which will in this view be admitted to be equally well founded with any other, are far from being satisfactorily sustained. Irenæus and Eusebius place Anacletus next to Linus; Tertullian places Clement in the nearest proximity to Peter; Epiphanius and Optatus seriously affirm, in their turn, that Anacletus and

Cletus were before Clement; Jerome, Augustine and Damasus, are at variance with them all, and assert that Aracletus, Cletus, and Linus, were all predecessors of Clement. Such is the '*rudis indigestaque moles*,' out of which it is proposed to deduce demonstrative evidence of the succession. And were some sublime genius, such as has never yet illuminated the world, to arise, and prove all this "discord, *harmony* not understood," and place the unbroken series in the most luminous point of view, what, I ask, would it *now* be worth, to establish the momentous point, in proof of which Irenæus and Tertullian refer to it—the unbroken continuity of saving truth;—a succession that "opposeth and exalteth itself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped"—a succession which, instead of "*holding forth* the Word of Life," has "*taken away* the key of knowledge"—a succession that anathematizes *your* Church as a formidable system of heresy and schism, delivering every man of you, *en masse*, over to Satan—a succession, in a word, "*drank with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.*"

I can hardly prevail upon myself to descend to notice in detail, the contemptible quibbles by which you endeavour to "find occasion" against Mr. Powell respecting his quotations from ORIGEN and CYPRIAN. An alleged inaccuracy in a reference, readily susceptible of explanation from typographical error, were error *proved* to exist in the case, is magnified by malignant perversity into deliberate falsification. Your proposed amendment of Mr. Powell's translation of the term *concilium*, I willingly leave to the decision of any one acquainted with Latin, on ecclesiastical subjects. I do not myself recognize the infallibility of the Pope, even when presiding in a œcumenical council; yet I am disposed to think that he understands Latin, and that the title by which such deliberative assemblages are designated, "*Concilia Generalia*," is unexceptionably correct. You, however, would have suggested another word, as *concilia* means nothing more than *advice*!

Of Cyprian's writings there are several printed editions and a variety of manuscript copies, by no means marked by perfect accordance, "*Ex tractatibus*"—says Rivetus, in his *Critici Sacri*—"qui hoc tempore Cypriani nomine circumferuntur quidam a Cypriano quidem sunt scripti, sed ab aliis interpolati; insertis quibusdam adulterinis sententiis, quibus verus auctoris

sensus deformatur." Under these circumstances, the edition from which any important citation is taken, ought, in justice, to be mentioned. This Mr. Powell has not omitted to do; and if the version consulted by Mr. Stopford differed in a single word from that, the question arises, On which are we to rely? In point of fact, it is of little consequence how this question is decided. In proof of this we drop the offending word, and give the reading approved by Mr. Stopford. Addressing the Presbyters associated with him he says:—"I rely on your love and religion, which I well know, and by these *letters* I exhort and COMMIT THE CHARGE to you, that you, whose presence does not expose you to such peril, would discharge my duty, act in my place, (*vice meâ*) and perform those things which the Church requires." If he did not mean by this remarkably and studiously explicit language, to devolve upon them, without limitation or reserve, his peculiar functions, what did he mean? To the next quotation from Cyprian, Mr. Stopford *earnestly requests* the attention of the *Wesleyan Body*, *that they may see what sort of a leader* (a distinction to which, I am sure, Mr. Powell never aspired) *they are following*; and then with solemn pomp, parades the passage, which certainly accords primacy to Peter, as a *Popish* interpolation, eagerly seized by Mr. Powell, and palmed upon his readers, as genuine. I shall profit by Mr. Stopford's exemplary zeal; and I do hereby solemnly warn all true-hearted Ministers and members of the Anglican Church, to beware of "the Popish forgery, and Protestant fraud, imposed upon them" by no less a personage than the celebrated Doctor Isaac Barrow; for they have only to look into his *Treatise on the Pope's Supremacy*, to be convinced, that he unhesitatingly recognizes the genuineness of the very passage in question. The proof is at hand:—"This is the notion," says the Doctor, "which St. Cyprian doth so much insist on, affirming that the Bishops do succeed St. Peter, and the other Apostles by vicarious ordination; † that the Bishops are Apostles; ‡ that (N. B.) *there is but ONE CHAIR by the Lord's word built on Peter*; § one undivided bishoprick, diffused in the peaceful numerosity of many bishops, whereof each bishop doth hold his share." Thus the illustrious instructor

* Barrows Works, Vol. 7, page 250, Hugh's Ed.

† Ep. 69, 42, 75.

‡ Ep. 65.

§ Ep. 40, 73, et de Unit. Eccl.

of Newton,—an authority at least equal to Mr. Stopford—recognizes the genuineness of the passage repudiated by him, as a Popish forgery.

On your translation of FIRMILIAN's phrase "*majores natu*," I will merely observe that you give its *signification*, but, most certainly, not his *sense*. I leave you in undisturbed possession of the sentiment of ATHANASIUS;—"By what means would you be a Christian, *there being no Bishop*?" It is time for all who reject Episcopacy to begin to reflect, and take seasonable warning; since, according to this *very scriptural* dogma, there never was, and indeed never can be, a Christian without a Bishop.

Precious coin from the mint of the fathers this, to be offered as legal tender in a Protestant country, in the nineteenth century!

Your last convulsive thrust at Mr. Powell's reputation, so far as the ancients are concerned, is one than which nothing could possibly have been more unprovoked. It is a charge of mangling by an absurd translation the following sentence in St. Augustine;—"Cum esset Presbyter, doluisse fertur [*i. e. Acrius*] quod Episcopus non potuit ordinari," which you say he thus translates—"Acrius maintained that a Bishop could not ordain." What was my surprise, on referring to Mr. Powell's work, in order to weigh the merits of this part of your elaborate indictment, to find that *he has neither cited this sentence, nor referred to it!* He does indeed refer to Augustine *de Heresibus*, No. 53, in which he thus states the cause of the *condemnation* of Acrius as a heretic, "Acrius maintained that a Bishop could not ordain. He opposed the *distinction* between a Bishop and a Presbyter; he rejected it; he also fell into the *heresy* of the Arians." Thus with inexcusable precipitancy you have confounded things that widely differ; and upon the basis of your own blunder, founded a gratuitous accusation against Mr. Powell. My present impression is, that the words you cite as Augustine's, belong not to him, but to EPIPHANIUS; who, as quoted by the Abbe Fleury, says, "Acrius desired to be a Bishop; and perceiving that Eustathius had obtained it before him, he conceived a great jealousy against him." * Certain it

* Eccles. Hist. Vol. 2, Book xix.

is, however, that, as Mosheim relates, "one of his principal tenets was, that Bishops were not distinguished from Presbyters by any divine right; but that *according to the institution of the New Testament* their offices and authority were *absolutely the same.*"

I have now discharged, according to my humble ability, the duty which the character and tone of your remarks on Mr. Powell's work, rendered so imperative. The degree of importance to be attached to your allegations relating to Bingham and Hooker, the plain English reader is quite competent to examine and appreciate for himself; and I commit the task to him, without the slightest solicitude as to the result. One remark only I beg to make:—If you do not allow Jerome to speak the *sense* of the *ancients*, you dissent from the unequivocal opinion of Bingham; and if any one, after reading the *third* Book of Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity, can assert that he considered Episcopacy absolutely essential to the constitution of a Christian Church, I can only say, that, from a regard to his *own* and the *public* safety, a close eye ought to be kept upon his mental phenomena, lest his aberrations should assume a more serious, and less harmless character.

May I now, Rev. Sir, without seeming to be too presumptuous, respectfully request you, to change your numerical summary of charges against Mr. Powell into "arithmetical noughts," as in my conscientious estimation, and as I think I have satisfactorily demonstrated, you are in duty bound. From the great plainness of speech, which, in consequence of the tone of your observations, I have felt myself called upon to employ, you may not improbably be inclined to conclude, that I too indicate "no very latent hostility and dislike to the Church of England." I solemnly disavow any such feeling. Nothing, amid the inauspicious signs of the times, is a source of deeper sorrow to my inmost soul, than the expenditure of so large an amount of her zeal on empty ceremonial and "endless genealogies"; while the glorious doctrines of the Reformation, to which she owes her existence and her elevation, are, by too many of her sons, fearfully compromised. And assuredly, nothing would inspire my mind with purer joy, or sublimer anticipations, than to behold her rising in her moral might, shaking from off her holy vestments the last particle of the polluting dust of Popery;

and, by the consecration of her giant energies and magnificent resources to the defence and propagation of "THE FAITH ONCE DELIVERED UNTO THE SAINTS," nobly redeeming her perilled reputation.

I have the honour to be, Reverend Sir,

Truly and obediently yours,

MATTHEW RICHEY.

Kingston, 6th Dec. 1843.

✂ Had I been aware of the fact, just announced in the *Christian Guardian*, that a reply to Mr. Stopford's work has appeared from Mr. Powell's own pen, I should have been strongly tempted to spare myself the pains-taking, which, from the nature of the subject, the composition of the preceding pages rendered necessary, under the disadvantages of a very indifferent state of health.

* * Errata:—Page 13, line 28, for suppositious read *supposititious*.—Page 21, line 4, for ominous read *ominous*.—Page 22, line 8, for simpliciate read *simplicite*.—Page 22, line 36, for Usebius read *Eusebius*.

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